

Restrictions Unfair

The time for registration, of calling the phone system 30 times a day, is finally over. But there are some aspects of registration that leave a sour taste.

The University of Alberta has a huge calendar, and at first glance there seems to be a wide variety of courses to take.

Think again, for there are restrictions on some courses which limit your freedom to study several courses. Some of these restrictions do not seem to be justified.

Of course, the graduate courses require restrictions, as do the courses of faculties such as Engineering and Pharmacy. And many courses, particularly science courses, must have a restricted enrollment in order to cope with the size of the classes. But it is the restrictions for other reasons of General Arts and Sciences courses which should be questioned.

These restrictions serve to segregate Arts and Sciences students and imply certain assumptions about their abilities. They oppose one of the original purposes of a university: to produce a well-rounded person with exposure to different disciplines and systems of thought.

For instance, Biology 210 is a Science course which science students are not allowed to take. As a result, it is full of Arts students fulfilling their Science option, and it has the reputation of being an "easy" course. I took the course myself two years ago, and I still do not understand why science students are barred from it. The course deals with issues arising from the conflict between man and his environment: pollution, ecology, hunger, population control, and the origins of man. Certainly this material is interesting to a Science student, particularly one concerned about the relationship between technology and the environment. The problems discussed in the class are those which a scientist would be directly concerned with, even contributing to — so why the restriction?

Another example is Political Science 316, "Mathematical Applications in Political Science." A friend of mine who is in Honours Math, tried to register in this course. However, it is not open to Business and Science students. She was furious. "Do they think that just because I'm in Math I'll outshine the others? That's not true! I do have an advantage in the Math side of it, but the other students would have the advantage when it comes to Political Science!"

"I thought the course would be perfect. It would be a chance to apply my Math to the Humanities, and I would learn a lot from that different approach. Isn't that what the University wants us to do?"

Apparently not. These courses are only two examples of many similar restrictions. As well, there are the service courses which further segregate students, such as English for Engineering Students. Of course, there is the range of prerequisites and "consent of the Department" rules; in order to satisfy these, the student must decide which area to specialize in rather soon — too soon — in his university career.

All of these restrictions result in limited choice for students, and discourage students from exploring subjects removed from their faculty or area of concentration.

The restrictions seem to be an attempt to segregate students according to faculty and department. Their courses of study are streamlined to fit a regular pattern. By these restrictions, the University assumes that Arts and Sciences students are not able to compete with each other, which is an underestimation of the intelligence of the students. After all, competition is inherent in any university course. And certainly the value of science requirements for Arts students, and the reverse, is lessened from this lack of competition.

Further, the restrictions that characterize certain courses demonstrate the University's assumption that students will specialize early, and its attitude that students should keep their area of specialization.

The system hinders the student who is interested in a variety of subjects. There can be no doubt that a well-rounded student has a scholastic frame of reference that will serve him beyond his particular field. Is this idea of a university education already outdated?

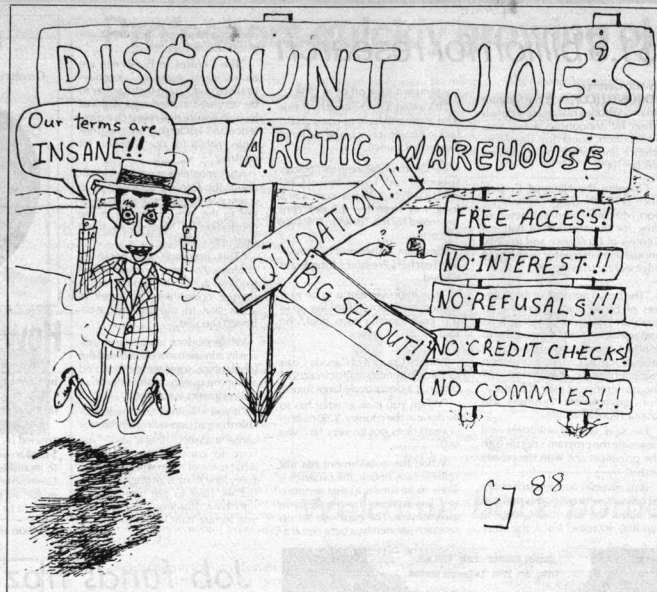
Baine Ostry

The Gateway

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CONTRIBUTORS: LANISE HAYES, COLIN GREEN, TOM WHARTON, MICHAEL TOLBOM, ROB JOHNSTONE, HORTAK ZUNG, TRACY KOBERSTERN, JEROME RYCKBORST, KRISTAN MCLEOD, CAROLYN ANEY, PAUL MENZIES, ROB GALBRAITH, GORD STECH, JUNE CHUJA, KAREN HEATON, NANCY FISCHER, MIKE SPINDLOE, DON TREMBATH

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LETTERS

Elitist Arts lounge

If anyone wants to relax, a luxurious lounge exists in the newly reopened Arts Building. The catch is, if you want to use it, get there quickly because the Romance Languages Graduate and Honours Society want to keep virtually everyone else out. The idea is to convert the Student Lounge into a facility for only Graduate and Honours Students (G&H) and of that number, only those who study in the five departments housed in the Arts Building.

Does this Society believe in equality of access? Do they wish to be selfish? Are they trying to make all other Grad and Honours students look foolish?

Those who want to keep the bulk of the student body out have well-founded arguments for exclusive use such as:

- 1) G&Hs are the primary users of the Arts Building (Has anyone heard of their students visiting their professors, the language lab, or Convocation Hall).
- 2) Undergrads have lots of lounges (Fact: Tony basement lounge became a stairwell, T14-9 and HCl-2 are now Grad space, HUB lounge space reduced, and Arts lounge unavailable for years due to renovation.).
- 3) They need space for meetings (Clubs can book University rooms free of charge).
- 4) "Graduate and Honours Students need a large room with windows where they can enjoy more daylight and more space." (May I add the logical conclusion... other students should be put in dungeons.) and
- 5) The crowning argument is basically that by getting an exclusive lounge G&Hs' work will improve and thus the University's reputation as a Research Centre will rise. (If only life were so simple!)

These few student seem to have forgotten that a lounge can be enjoyed by everyone and benefits can also flow to everyone.

Sign the petition to keep the lounge open to all. Even if you don't use the Arts Building please sign. If this restriction goes through there will be no end of similar conversions, and then where will you relax? Signatures can be affixed during the week of January 20th as follows: W 1200-1230, R 1230-1300, or F 1200-1230 in or near the Student Lounge, 2nd floor, Old Arts Building.

Ross Penner

Losing faith in S.U.

I was very interested in reading the article in Thursday's edition of *The Gateway* regarding the request of the Golden Bear Basketball team for money. It was also nice to see the article along side of the use of Student Union money which was lost in the stock market.

These two articles, plus numerous others, has caused me to reflect and ponder about the way which our so called Student Union Government is wielding the power that has been entrusted to them by the students at the University of Alberta.

Since I started attending the University, there have been such great events as Bambi, the use of classrooms which were taken for granted and not paid for, people driving cars to events and having the students pay for the trip, and as Thursday's edition pointed out, the loss of some \$31,000 in the stock market. These events have caused me to realize that the Student Union is really not for the Students, but for a handful of people which only have their best interests at heart.

I am very offended by the fact that the Golden Bears Basketball team is being treated as some "Mickey Mouse" institution that is only after money. Is the basketball team at the University something that we are ashamed of, or is it an organization that we are proud of. Steve Twible's remarks that the road trip to California and Hawaii was more of a vacation were very inadequate, as was his handling of the situation. I guess Mr. VP Finance and the SU President forgot about their vacation which they took to British Columbia.

It was also noted that funds were given to the hockey team so they could take a trip to Czechoslovakia, because they, the hockey team, were the best. If the same amount of funding was given to the basketball team as to the hockey team, our basketball team would be the best also.

It could be that the losses which have suffered by the so called Students Stocks need to be made up somewhere and the basketball team is one area to start. Before the Student Government cleans up too much, they need to do some interior cleaning!

Kevin Sheen

Paranoia over pot

First of all, I would like to mention that I enjoyed reading *The Gateway's* "Drug Growing a right at UBC?" because it contained a degree of validity towards a social issue which is usually written off as the pipe-dream of an over-embittered and undereducated adolescent. Furthermore, I wish to bring to the readers' attention that marijuana was made illegal in the West Indies by slave plantation owners merely to increase the sugar-cane (and therefore rum) production. In the United States, cannabis was delegatized as a result of an overzealous and underfunded leader of the Drug Enforcement Agency (remember the propaganda movie, *Reefer Madness? They were serious!*) Finally, I would like to conclude this letter by offering a little advice to Mr. Langley: the only appreciable harm marijuana will bring you will occur when two (or more) undercover police officers come to your door — and they will — in order to beat the ever-living shit out of you! Indeed, when these valiant men have completed their selfish task towards the preservation of freedom and democracy, you will emigrate to the United States, join the military, and ultimately become a devote Republican-free from the destructive influence of individualism, or any remaining form of intellectual deviance that you now possess (feeling paranoid Blair? — have an omelette!)

Rachel Livingstone